(c) the extent of work done in this respect in the State of Andhra Pradesh in the last one and half year?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRA SEKHAR RAO) : (a) As per 2001 Census, the total population of Andhra Pradesh is 7,62,10,007 out of which 9.02% *i.e.* 68,71,904 were agricultural labourers.

(b) and (c) The Central Government has launched several welfare and poverty alleviation/employment generation schemes for the rural poor which, *inter-alia*, include agricultural workers. Some of such schemes are: Swarnjayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana, Sampoorna Gramin Rojgar Yojana, Pradhanmantri Gram Sadak Yojana, National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP), etc. The Government is implementing Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) with the objective to provide assistance to the Below Poverty Line (BPL) rural households. The Agriculture Insurance Company of India is implementing National Agricultural Insurance Scheme providing for insurance of crops during Kharif and Rabi Season. The Government has recently enacted National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, which provides for 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in every financial year to everyhousehold whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. Further, Janshree Bima Yojana providing for insurance cover to people living below or marginally above the poverty line, is also available for workers in the unorganised sector including agricultural workers. The Government has also redesigned the Universal Health Insurance Scheme (UHIS), which is available to families living below poverty line (BPL) which, *inter-alia*, include agricultural workers, at subsidized annual premium of Rs. 165, Rs. 248 and Rs. 330 for individual, a family of five, and a family of seven respectively. The scheme provides for reimbursement of hospitalization expenses up to Rs. 30,000/- basis per family, coverage of death of worker due to accident (Rs. 25,000/-) etc. To protect the agricultural labourers from exploitation of landlords, the Government of Andhra Pradesh have fixed minimum rates of wages under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948. For effective implementation of the minimum wages, the State Government have notified the Inspectors.

Reforms in labour policy

1736. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are proposing to reform the labour policy;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the proposal envisages allowing employers to contract all types of jobs by amending Contract labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970, the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, etc; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRA SEKHAR RAO) : (a) and (b) A "Discussion Paper" 'making labour markets flexible' has been prepared for eliciting the views of the stakeholders. It contains certain suggestions to amend the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970 and the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, streamlining inspection regime, and use of Information and Communication Technology.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. The Paper only mentions a possible list of activities which can be placed in a separate schedule to which the provisions of Section 10 of the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970 may not apply. These, *inter-alia*, include sweeping, cleaning, dusting and gardening; collection and disposal of garbage and waste; security, watch and ward; maintenance and repair of plant, machinery and equipments; housekeeping, laundry, canteen and courier; loading and unloading; information technology; specified support services; export oriented units established in Special Economic Zones and units exporting more than 75% or more of their production; and construction and maintenance of buildings, roads and bridges.

Benefits of textile quota

1737. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that International Labour Organization has warned that if India does not accelerate reforms, the benefits of textile quota would remain confined to a limited number of sub-contractors; and

(b) if so, what steps Government are going to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRA SEKHAR RAO) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) To meet the challenges of globalization labour reforms in the textile sector are one of the crucial pre-requisites for encouraging growth and investment, including Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), exports and for promotion of the employment opportunities. The issue of labour reforms needs consensus among social partners to harmonize the interests of capital and labour. In this connection, views of various stakeholders are being acertained as a consensus building process.